

Mr. TED LIEU of California. So let me follow up what Representative GALLEGU said. We have a person in the White House now with a security clearance even though he has lied on at least two of those forms. So there actually needs to be an investigation. That security clearance needs to be suspended immediately.

But, also, for any intelligence official watching this or reading about this, how can you trust Jared Kushner when he lied on these security clearance forms and makes a mockery of the process?

Keep in mind this is the same person who suggested setting up a secret back channel with the Russians at the Russian Embassy. So the only reason you would want to use Russian equipment at the Russian Embassy is to hide information from U.S. intelligence. So even if his security clearance is not suspended, I really hope that people working for him do not trust him.

Mr. GALLEGU. If you start seeing and putting it all together, we now know that there is a clear narrative of Jared Kushner's involvements with the Russians.

First, he tries to set up a back channel. Then he omits his conversations and meetings in a security clearance. He continues to lie even though he is continuously brought forth as being untruthful. Now we find ourselves in the situation where there is basically zero trust that this man in the White House with top secret clearance is not compromised.

In conclusion, let me close with this. You just heard emails after emails. Imagine this conversation happening the opposite way. Imagine a conversation happening with a Democrat or the Clintons saying, I have information, and the word Moscow is said probably four or five times altogether.

Imagine the idea that you are meeting in private, and then imagine all the follow-up lies that happened.

What would be occurring right now? What would be occurring is what we saw last year: consistent oversight. But there is none. There is no oversight right now. PAUL RYAN has not taken the helm and has not done any type of oversight. The House Republicans have abdicated their responsibility and have allowed Donald Trump and all those other members of his family and the administration who have been compromised to continue being a threat to our national security in the White House.

This should not be the way. Partisanship should never be above patriotism. But what we are seeing right now is naked partisanship being exposed and pushed as far as possible in the hopes of protecting a faulty President, his administration, and his family.

That is not American. That is not what any of us ever signed up for. We swore—whether it was in the Armed Services Committee, whether it was when we were in the armed services, or whether it is when we came here to

Congress—to uphold the Constitution of the United States and protect it.

Right now we can honestly say that that is not occurring. There is an absolute abdication happening right now of leadership from House Republicans.

TED, please close.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Let me conclude by saying that the President said that most people would have taken this meeting. That is just not true.

Again, under the Federal Election Campaign Act, if you solicit, or conspire to solicit, or show up at a meeting where you expect to get opposition research from a foreign national, that is a violation of the Federal law. So, in fact, most people would not have taken this meeting unless they were crooked.

We have an example here of what happened when the Al Gore campaign got information. They were sent anonymously briefing notes and things that then Bush was being briefed on and so on. They took that package, and they turned it over to the FBI. That is what should have happened in this case.

In conclusion, this is a pretty big deal. We have people in the White House who believe they are above the law. The lesson in Watergate is that no one is above the law.

Mr. GALLEGU. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to direct all remarks to the Chair and to formally yield and reclaim time when under recognition.

DOUBLE STANDARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that my two colleagues refused to yield any time when they are talking, especially when they are using phrases like naked partisanship. That is very interesting, isn't it? We could have had a nice dialog here. I was asking for a chance to go into a dialogue so the American people could understand what was being said rather than this incredible naked partisanship of people who disagree, but I won't yield my time to have a dialogue about it.

I am afraid that doesn't cut it. This is yet another example of what we have seen of people using sinister-sounding descriptions in order to basically distract us from some of the corruption and, I might add, questionable activities of their own Presidential candidate in the last election who was defeated because the American people did not trust that candidate.

By the way, I would like to have asked—I am sorry that my friends have left and wouldn't yield any time for a question—whether or not they believe that Hillary Clinton's activities in Russia while she was a government official, was she involved in money rais-

ing from Russian oligarchs to the tune of millions—tens of millions—of dollars?

Was her husband involved in raising this money while she was Secretary of State or while she was a candidate for President of the United States over in Russia, millions of dollars to the Clinton Foundation? I understand even hundreds of thousands of dollars were put in her husband's pocket for a speech that he gave in Russia.

□ 1315

These things need to be looked at. Instead, what we are hearing about is sinister-sounding words about a meeting where someone said they had some information that would help, yes, the campaign, but the reason it would help the campaign is there was supposedly information that showed that Hillary Clinton was involved in some activity that was contrary to the interests of the United States or contrary to the law.

Yes, if someone says to you that they want to give you information, there is nothing wrong with that. In fact, I would hope that my colleagues who just said what is happening on our side of the aisle is naked partisanship, I wonder if the Democratic Party and my other colleagues in this body are calling for Hillary to release all of her emails and to make sure that we have under oath an explanation of these transactions to the Clinton Foundation. Instead, we are hearing all sorts of sinister descriptions of a meeting that was going to give information.

I will tell you right now, everybody in this body, if they think that there could be information that is important for our country to know from any foreigner, we should talk to them and find out what it is. It is not illegal to receive information from someone, especially if you are engaged in an activity that is aimed at trying to secure understanding for policies that you plan to implement as a leader in the United States as an elected leader. There absolutely is nothing wrong.

By the way, I am the chairman of the Europe, Eurasia and Emerging Threats Subcommittee. Russia is in my jurisdiction. Should I ever turn down a chance to talk to somebody who has information for me, negative or positive, about Russia?

No, I shouldn't. And neither should the Trump campaign have ignored any community to receive more information about what was being done by Hillary, perhaps, and the raising of the millions of dollars for the foundation.

So that was a legitimate thing to ask. Then you determine: Is the information accurate or is it not accurate? If it is not accurate, you don't want to touch it.

But many people were disturbed that there had been a release of emails during the campaign, and a lot of the questions about this whole Russia issue is whether Russia or somebody else actually hacked into the system and released those emails.

I think what is important is only whether truth was revealed. If someone was talking about releasing negative and false information, the public should be upset about that. But they should not be upset if they are being given a chance to see more information that is accurate information on this issue.

I would hope and trust that the American people are smart enough to see a diversionary tactic using sinister words over and over again to describe something that is perfectly legal. In some cases, as I say, talking to anybody to get more information to help you make your decisions is a good thing and not a bad thing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate so much my very good friend from California, with whom I have traveled abroad and had some amazing meetings with representatives of countries around the world.

As I listened to our friends on the other side talk about this issue, it appears very clear what they are saying is that every Member of the House who has ever met with someone from a foreign country and asked questions, whether they believe what they were given or not, is guilty of a crime and should be damned to hell for all eternity.

Basically, is that my friend's impression?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that that is what is being said: because those people are so sinister, you don't listen to them; or, the whole act is sinister, it may be legal.

In reality, we are talking about one person meeting with another who may have information. We in Congress and anyone running for public office should be listening and seeing if there is information that is imparted that is important for our country to know.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the gentleman from California and I have met with the then-leader of Iraq. Neither the gentleman from California nor I cared for the man. He was the Prime Minister of Iraq. He did a great deal of damage to Iraq. He, along with President Obama, dramatically weakened Iraq.

I know my friend recalls our conversation with Prime Minister Maliki. We were asking for answers to questions that we considered very serious.

For example, I was asking about his commitment to protect the refugees from Iran that he had pledged to protect. My friend from California was asking about the Iraqi pledge to help pay us back for some of our costs in making Iraq free.

Those two issues so infuriated Prime Minister Maliki that we got word later when we were on the C-130 that we were being banned from Iraq by the Prime Minister.

But to hear our friends across the aisle talk, every time one of them and every time one of us on this side of the

aisle have asked even people we consider to be despicable and have done terrible things and we wanted answers, we were committing a crime in demanding those answers.

I also know my friend from California got similar treatment from a man we believed was corrupt as the leader of Afghanistan at the time.

I don't find any crime or any harm in asking questions and getting answers, even from people for whom we have no respect. So I think it is a good thing. If anybody has got information, even if you don't care for them, try to get the answers to those questions.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, well, we know now people are trying to frighten us and others not to meet with people and not to talk to people. I wonder why.

As far as I am concerned, I don't have just a blind trust in whatever our intelligence agencies give us. Let me note that many of the things that are being quoted aren't even being quoted from our intelligence agencies during this whole national discussion on what Russia's interaction with us has been for the last couple of years.

The fact is that these intelligence reports are filled with weasel words. A weasel word is making it sound like you are saying something, but you put a phrase in that actually doesn't commit you to defending that particular position as being factual.

With that said, I would hope that the American people pay close attention to the sinister words, but also the weasel words, and pay attention to the basic nonsense in telling us that: Oh, a horrible crime has been committed now, because someone in the Trump campaign—whatever it was; I don't care if it was Donald Trump's relatives or his son or whoever it was, anybody in the campaign whatsoever—wants to talk to anybody in the world to get information. I think that is a good thing.

Whether or not at that point it has to be determined whether it is accurate information, to move forward with accurate information is wrong, but your job, too, is to verify what somebody is telling you before you let it influence your policymaking or the decisions that you are making at that moment.

With that said, I would like to change the subject at this point, because I had another issue that I really would like to talk about today.

BITCOIN

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, I am the chairman, as I mentioned, of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats. I am a senior member also of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. I am here, basically, to discuss emerging technology that is unleashing a new economic dynamic, but it could also be negatively impacting on our national security.

I have long considered myself a proponent of freedom. Instead of government controls, I have trusted free people and free markets with optimism that technology and innovation would

deal with the perplexing challenges to our security and our prosperity.

In recent years, one of the more exciting innovations helping reshape the way we live is the introduction of digital currency here and globally.

Thanks to this leap in technology, times are changing right before our eyes. Americans have new ways of fighting inflation and handling their personal business obligations. People with bitcoins living under despotic regimes throughout the world now have the opportunity to protect their assets from abusive and corrupt government. Indeed, the security of the blockchain technology will enable a new wave of societal advances that should invigorate our markets and improve lives.

However, with all that potential benefit of digital currency, there is also danger. It empowers the good people of the world, but it also can be used by those who have goals that are malevolent and evil.

Radical Islamic terrorism is now a horrendous threat that hangs over all the free people in the world, in the United States, and elsewhere. Law enforcement throughout the world is now aware that bitcoin is available for use for terrorists in accomplishing their gruesome missions.

What makes it a good deal for terrorists?

It is anonymous. They can transfer funds using a digital currency platform without any of the usual safeguards that thwart terrorists and criminal activity.

Anti-money laundering and know-your-customer standards have worked to deal with criminals in recent decades, but now that approach can be technologically undermined by the use of the bitcoin instead of traditional currency.

Since digital currencies such as the bitcoin offer a free ability to transfer funds, some of our neighbors, such as Sweden, Thailand, Vietnam, and India, have banned their use.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that that is a necessary or practical response. Banning digital currencies will not prevent terrorists from using them any more than banning guns will prevent criminals from using them.

Instead of banning all the digital currencies because some lack standards, I believe we should encourage digital currencies to implement full anti-money laundering and know-your-customer standards.

These protections should empower both our law enforcement and national security professionals to keep terrorist and criminal financing under control while preserving for the rest of us the freedom to use digital currencies.

Thus, with the proper type of regulatory look and seeing what options are available to us, we can prevent terrorists and criminals under control from financing their operations with bitcoins, but the rest of us will still be free to use these new digital currencies and enable America to keep the lead in

the world in this enthusiastic technological advance.

In light of my chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, and my experience in the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I look forward to joining with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to encourage economic innovation brought by the bitcoins, but also to see to it that digital currencies will have strong standards that will thwart the exploration of this new economic function by terrorists and criminals and other evil forces in the world.

□ 1330

So I look forward to working with my colleagues. I think this is a bipartisan issue. I won't try to make it sound sinister at all, because this is something we can work on, and we must keep America always in the forefront of technological development.

We know with each step forward in technology, there is a potential harm that can be done, but we need to make sure that is taken into consideration, while at the same time that we do not thwart Americans from using the ultimate technologies of the day to secure prosperity and secure freedom and to secure our national security with these new technologies.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much my friend from California, DANA ROHRBACHER, making the point that he did.

There is nothing either sinister, wrong, criminal, improper when someone is engaged in an election or when someone is not engaged in an election, if offered information that may be helpful, whatever the source. Unless it is a known criminal that is going to advise someone about some potential crime, there is normally nothing wrong with seeking or even getting that information.

I doubt there is anybody on this House floor, when offered information from a source about an opponent in a campaign, didn't at least take some action to see if there was anything legitimate to it.

So it is just amazing, when we know that there is certainly probable cause to believe crimes have been committed during the Obama administration, yet we got nothing in the way of support in investigating the probable cause of real legitimate crimes; not those for which there is no known criminal statute that would be applicable or that may have been violated, but simply, you know, there may be times when it is bad taste.

But the villainization of Donald Trump, Jr., for inquiring of someone

that Loretta Lynch, as Attorney General for President Obama, specifically and personally stepped in to ensure could be in this country, it is just incredible how much is being made of Donald Trump, Jr., meeting with somebody that Attorney General Lynch pulled all kinds of strings to get her in and keep her in the country.

And then when you see that picture of this same person sitting right behind the Obama Ambassador to Russia, Ambassador McFaul, and you know at these hearings, especially an appointed and confirmed official like an ambassador, they don't want somebody directly behind them who is not supportive and not capable of reaching up and handing them a note with information that may be helpful and them answering a question.

We have had countless hearings, and I have seen it done countless times. You want somebody behind you that can help provide answers to questions that you may not can answer without their help.

So there she is, this person that these same friends who pulled all kinds of strings to get her in this country. They are all upset that she ever talked to Donald Trump, Jr., and he has—I admire the fact that he immediately saw that this was a worthless meeting and walked away from it. So pretty amazing. It was good judgment to walk away from it, once he found out what she was about.

I wish that President Obama, Loretta Lynch, and Hillary Clinton had as good a judgment in their meetings with people instead of telling our enemy—and I do consider the man with whom President Obama was meeting an enemy. He was not a friend of the United States.

And what does President Obama do when he doesn't think the microphone can pick him up?

He says: Tell Vladimir Putin—President Obama's close buddy—tell Vladimir, my buddy, that I have a lot more flexibility once I am past this election.

"Okay. Yeah. I will pass that on. Dah, dah, I will pass that on."

Clear intent; there is no mistaking. The intent is: I will be able to give away more of America's defenses the way I canceled our missile defense system in Poland once I am reelected because then I don't care. I won't be running. I can't be defeated in another election. So I will be able to give away a lot more of America's defenses.

And what did our friends—who are now so upset about Donald Trump meeting with a Russian lawyer, finding out she was not worth meeting with and leaving—do back then?

Nothing. They defended President Trump's actions either vocally or by their silence while we were raising questions.

I can't end this week without expressing my grave disappointment with Congress over a specific detail of the National Defense Authorization Act. There are a number of things in there that bother me that I think are big

mistakes and that I don't think we should be doing. I think we are wasting money, but compromises have to be made. We are making a form of sausage called "laws," so we have got to compromise on some things.

But there are some things that are so important that there cannot be a compromise. It is too important. It will result in lives being saved or lives being lost, depending on what we do here in Congress.

So our friend, Congresswoman VICKY HARTZLER, realized before I did that the law, as would be in the National Defense Authorization Act, with all the compromises that had to be made under the great leadership—and I am not being sarcastic—of Congressman MAC THORNBERRY—did a masterful job handling all the problems that arose—but the law of the NDAA was and will be, under this new law, such that President Obama and his administration would say, the way it is worded, the way it is, authorizes us to decide that an appropriate use of this very limited more and more precious money for our military to defend us can and should be used whenever someone requests a sex change operation.

The reports are that, with the hormonal treatment, it can be around \$130,000 or so per person. Military commanders advise that they have been told: If you have a military member under your command that asks for a sex change operation and you say something like "have you really thought this through?" or they say something like "why don't you talk to a counselor?" or "let's talk about this" or "you give it some more thought," those are career-ending statements that that commander would have made; that if someone requests a sex change operation, you don't ask questions, you don't refer them to counseling, you don't suggest that they give it more thought. You just sign them up.

Now, the problem there, too, is that apparently they are advised that they have about 2 years minimum that this servicemember will be out of commission, cannot be deployed, you can't be sending them anywhere because you have months of hormonal treatment leading up to the sex change surgery. And then even if there are no complications, the followup and the rehab is quite significant. So you better count on at least a couple of years minimum where that servicemember, that military member cannot be sent anywhere, cannot be ordered deployed. They are useless in defense of our country as far as filling the immediate needs of the military, and that is astounding.

Now, potentially, some might submit that we have come to find out about maybe the greatest political lobbying by any group of our medical practitioners. And those who compile the diagnostic statistic manual, referred to as DSM—we have had I, II, III, IV, V—each time, they have been subjected to political lobbying because they didn't